

Serial No. 09/681,431

RD-27767

**REMARKS**

In a Final Office Action of December 16, 2003, claims 1-49 were rejected. In response, the Applicant has filed a Request for Continued Application (RCE) accompanied by this Submission. In this Submission, claims 1, 24, 40, 44, 45 and 47 have been amended, and claim 27 has been cancelled. Claims 1-26 and 28-49 remain pending in the application. In accordance with 37 CFR 1.121 (f) no new matter has been added.

In a response dated September 30, 2003, the Applicant responded to each of the issues raised again in the last Office Action, that dated December 16, 2003. In this communication, the Applicant reasserts the arguments made in his September 30, 2003 response and respectfully encourages the Examiner to reconsider the earlier claim rejections in light of the amendments to the claims presented herewith. The Applicant therefore respectfully traverses each of the rejections made by the Examiner in the Office Action of December 16, 2003 and requests that these rejections be removed.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-26 and 28-49. Should the Examiner feel that anything further is required to put the Application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's representative indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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